

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-10 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGR-05 /092 W

----- 114430

R 201450Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0503

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

CONFIDENTIAL CONAKRY 0265

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: GV PDEV

SUBJECT: CONTINUED TIGHTENING OF GUINEAN ECONOMIC CONTROLS

REF: CONAKRY 0190

1. PRESIDENT TOURE RETURNED FROM UNPRECEDENTED 28-DAY TOUR
OF INTERIOR TOWNS ON FEB 13 AND GAVE MAJOR SPEECH TO CONAKRY
MASS MEETING FEB 15 SPELLING OUT CURRENT CAMPAIGN TO CONTROL
PARALLEL MARKET AND SMUGGLING. CONAKRY RIFE WITH RUMORS THAT
SEVERAL MINISTERS ABOUT TO BE FIRED OR EVEN IMPRISONED, AND
THAT CERTAIN AFRICAN EMBASSIES ARE SUSPECTED OF COMPLICITY
IN ILLEGAL TRANSACTIONS. THERE ARE PERSISTENT REPORTS THAT 30
SMUGGLERS HAVE BEEN SHOT AT FRONTIER POSTS.

2. AMONG MANY SPECIFIC POINTS MADE IN TOURE'S FEB 15 SPEECH

WERE:

A. PARTY/STATE CELLS (PRL'S) WILL BUY AND DISTRIBUTE ALL
LOCALLY-PRODUCED GOODS, AND WILL DISTRIBUTE ALL GOV'T-IMPORTED
ITEMS. EACH PRL ALSO DIRECTED TO SET UP A SUGAR CANE PLANTATION,
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TAPIOCA REFINERY AND VARIOUS OTHER ENTERPRISES.

B. QUANTITY OF GOODS MADE AVAILABLE BY GOV'T TO PRL'S
WILL DEPEND ON THEIR OWN PRODUCTION.
C. ILLEGAL PRICE "RISES" (INCLUDING FOR PUBLIC TRANS-
PORTATION) ARE PUNISHABLE BY 5-15 YEARS IN PRISON.
D. ILLEGAL CURRENCY TRANSACTIONS, INCLUDING PASSING
"COUNTERFEIT" MONEY, ARE PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.
E. ANY ILLEGAL CURRENCY TRANSACTION INVOLVING A FOREIGN
EMBASSY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE CLOSING OF THAT EMBASSY,
AND GUINEAN ACCOMPLICE IS LIABLE TO 5-15 YEARS IN PRISON.
F. TOURE SPECIFIED THAT GOV'T OFFICIALS AT VARIOUS
LEVELS ARE CHARGED WITH ENFORCING ABOVE OR FACING PRISON, AND
HAVE UNTIL END OF FEBRUARY TO EITHER STOP ALL PARTICIPATION
IN COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES OR ELSE RESIGN. MINISTERS AND OTHER
SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE LIABLE FOR CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IF CAUGHT
PARTICIPATING IN ANY BLACK MARKET OR OTHER ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES.

3. COMMENT: AS NOTED REFTEL, THE ENTIRE BASIS FOR THIS
CAMPAIGN IS THE PREMISE THAT "REVOLUTIONARY" SPIRIT (TOGETHER
WITH RELIGIOUS CONVICTION, SINCE TOURE HAS EXPRESSLY CALLED
FOR "HOLY WAR" AGAINST BLACK MARKETEERS) WILL MOTIVATE THE
GUINEAN PEOPLE -- FROM THE MINISTERS TO THE FARMERS -- TO
PRODUCE, TO REDUCE PRICES TO A SMALL FRACTION OF THEIR PAST
LEVELS, AND TO ENDURE THE SHORTAGES AND SUFFERING WHICH THE
CAMPAIGN HAS ALREADY PRODUCED. NO FOREIGN OBSERVER TO WHOM
WE HAVE TALKED-- INCLUDING MANY FROM EASTERN BLOC--
BELIEVES THIS CAN SUCCEED, SINCE REINEAN GOV'T HAS NEITHER
SUFFICIENT GOODS, INCLUDING FOOD PRODUCTS, TO OFFER FOR SALE,
NOR THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO OBTAIN THEM. GUINEAN OFFICIALS
NATURALLY SUPPORT CAMPAIGN, OR REMAIN SILENT. GUINEAN PEOPLE,
WHO SEE MARKET STALLS ALMOST COMPLETELY BARE, ARE CONFUSED,
RESENTFUL, BUT STILL APPARENTLY RESIGNED TO FURTHER SUFFERING
UNTIL-- AS THEY HOPE AND EXPECT-- THIS LATEST CAMPAIGN FALLS
OF ITS OWN WEIGHT.

4. BUT THE BUBBLE HAS NOT YET BURST, IN THE SENSE OF AN
OPPOSITION SURFACING, OR A GOV'T-SPONSORED PURGE OF OFFICIALS
WHICH COULD PROVOKE MORE ORGANIZED RESISTANCE. EMBASSY
ESTIMATE IS STILL THAT EFFORT TO ENFORCE TOURE'S LATEST SCHEMES
WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO TAPER OFF, EVEN IF SPEECHES CONTINUE,
AND COUNTRY WILL RETURN TO SUBSISTENCE PARALLEL-MARKET ECONOMY.
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PROBLEM IS THAT TOURE HAS COMMITTED HIS REGIME'S--AND HIS OWN--
PRESTIGE TO THIS CAMPAIGN, AND IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW HE
CAN DRAW BACK.

5. PRESUMABLY TOURE WILL REMAIN IN CONAKRY FOR AT LEAST THE
NEXT FEW WEEKS TO PONDER POSSIBLE MINISTERIAL CHANGES (ONE
SENIOR AFRICAN COLLEAGUE HAS HEARD THAT A NEW SLATE IS ALREADY
DRAWN UP), AND TO TRY TO ORCHESTRATE A WELL-PUBLICIZED SERIES

OF ARRESTS OF SMUGGLERS AND OTHER CRIMINALS. (SOME SUCH ARRESTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN ON THE RADIO.) TOURE WILL ALSO BE DEALING WITH THE FOREIGN PARTNERS OF THE MAJOR BAUXITE AND ALUMINA COMPANIES AS THEY FORMULATE THEIR RESPONSE TO THE NEW MINERALS TAX. THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS WILL OBVIOUSLY BE CRITICAL ONES FOR THE GUINEAN ECONOMY.

MACDONALD

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